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=INDEX=
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=Atari News Update=
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#: 197288 S7/HOT News/Rumors   05-Oct-87 14:19:06
Sb: ATARI CLOSES OFFER!
Fm: SYSOP*Mike Schoenbach 76703,4363
To: ALL

OTC 10/05   ATARI CLOSES TENDER OFFER FOR FEDERATED GROUP

 SUNNYVALE, CA (OCT. 5) PRWIRE - Atari Corporation (AMEX, PSE: ATC) has
announced the closing of its tender offer for all of the outstanding shares of
the Federated Group, Inc. (NASDAQ: FEGP), effective as of midnight EDT, Oct.
4. Approximately 96 percent of outstanding shares of Federated have been
validly tendered.

 Effective at 7 p.m. EDT, Atari Corporation extended its tender offer for
Federated's shares to midnight, Oct. 4. The tender offer had initially been
scheduled to terminate on Sept. 25 and had previously been extended to Oct. 2.
The purpose of the further extension was to allow Atari, Federated, and
Federated's bank lenders to complete documentation for the closing.

 Atari is an international manufacturer and marketer of personal computer
systems and video games. Federated sells home entertainment and consumer
electronics products through a chain of retail stores.

 CONTACT: Greg Pratt of Atari, 408-745-2349; or Merrill Lyons of the
Federated Group, 213-728-5100, ext. 204.

 Atari Corp. has started shipping its new Mega 2 and Mega 4 computers to
authorized Atari business computer centers.

 According to Atari, the new two- and four-megabyte computers, which are aimed
at small-business users, feature a small footprint, separate keyboard, battery
powered real-time clock, BLiTTER chip and a bus for plugging in add-on boards
and peripherals. In addition, the new machines are compatible with software
and peripherals designed for the Atari ST line.

 "The Mega demonstrates Atari's commitment to the computer specialty
retailer," said Sam Tramiel, Atari's president. "Features in the Mega are the
direct result of requests from dealers and business users. The Mega is a

professional computer offering the highest performance for advanced business,
engineering, desktop publishing, desktop presentation and personal computer
applications."

 --John Edwards   CompuServe Online Today
 ===
 =GEnie Bulletin Board Help=
 ===========================

 The Roundtable Bulletin Board is an area where you can leave messages for the
other Roundtable members, and read messages left by others, on a wide range of
subjects.

 To make it easier to find messages of interest, the BB has been divided into
broad areas, or Categories, covering subjects such as Hardware, Software,
Graphics, Games, etc.

 Within each Category, the messages are sub-divided into Topics of discussion,
with threads of individual messages within each Topic. When you enter the BB,
you will always be in Category #1. To take a look at the list of Categories
available, just type CATegories (All BB commands can be abbreviated to the
first 3 letters of the command)

 The first time you join the Roundtable, and enter the Bulletin Board, there
will be hundreds of messages already posted by other members. To avoid being
overwhelmed by all the existing messages, you may use the IGNore command to
make the BB think you've already read them. (They will all still be there,
and available for you to read them when you want to.)

 Enter: IGN ALL >870801 for example, which will IGNore ALL Topics with
messages older than August 1, 1987. Then, you can take a look at the list of
Topics available in Category #1 by typing: TOPICS

 You can read the messages in a Topic which sounds interesting by typing: REA
2 for example, which will REAd the messages in Topic #2. To change to another
Category, simply type: SET 3   for example, which will set you to Category #3.
Remember, you can type CAT for the list of Categories.

 Then you can go through the same process of IGNoring the existing messages,
and only reading the Topics of interest to you.

 The next time you log onto GEnie, and enter the BB, you can easily read any
new messages which have been left since your last session, by typing: BRO
which will BROwse through all the Topics, and show you only the new messages.
If you are interested only in new messages in a particular Topic, you can
still SET to the Category the Topic is in, then enter: REA 7 NEW for example,
which will REAd the NEW messages in Topic #7, if there are any.

 One thing to remember about most of the commands in the Bulletin Board is
that the command looks for the Topic number you want to see, right after the
command itself. Thus, READ 7 will be OK, but READ NEW will ask you what
Topic you want to read. Sometimes the commands will not work as you expect if
you enter them in the wrong order!

 You can also enter a range of Topic numbers to read: READ 7-12 will show you
all the messages in Topics 7 through 12.

 If you're not interested in seeing ANY messages in a particular Category, you
can permanently CANcel it by entering CAN 9 for example, which will stop
showing you messages in the Games Category. You can CANcel any number of

unwanted Categories.

  Categories which have been CANceled can be recovered by typing JOIN which
will re-join all the CANcelled Categories. Unfortunately, as of this writing,
there is NO way of permanently CANcelling individual Topics within a Category.
Using the IGNore command will only ignore existing new messages. Any messages
which are added after you use the IGNore command will still be shown to you.
A permanent Topic IGNore command is being worked on by the GEnies.

  There are some additional options which you can use to selectively read
messages in the Bulletin Board. You can read messages left by a particular
person by using the AUThor option: READ ALL AUT=SAM.SPADE will show you all
the messages in the current Category written by the person with the username
of SAM.SPADE.

  The DATE option will allow you to read messages written before, after, or on
a certain date: READ ALL DATE>871001 will show you all messages in the
current Category which were written after October First, 1987.

  The option of LAST will show you only the last message left in a Topic:READ 7
LAST. One handy option is NO REPLY. This will let you Capture messages
without the Bulletin Board pausing at the end of each Topic to give you the
chance to reply, or add a message of your own. You can open the Capture
Buffer in your Terminal Program, then enter BRO ALL NOR which will display
ALL the new messages in the Bulletin Board, without stopping. Then you can
log off of GEnie and save the messages to your disk, or print them out to read
at your leisure.

  Once you've learned how to READ messages in the Bulletin Board, the next step
is to learn how to write your own messages.

  (Next time, we will continue with this text.)
  ===
  =New Product Announcement=
  =======================

  Antic announces FLASH 1.5, the successor to the immensely popular version 1.0
of the FLASH terminal program...

  FLASH 1.5 features include:

  Improved editor:
        Automatic word-wrap at user-selectable line width.
        Paragraph or block reformatting.
        Search and replace function.
        Auto-repeat scroll bar.
        Faster operation.

  Enhanced ANSI [VT100] terminal emulation:
  Graphic [ine-drawing] character set.
  True underlining of text.
  Full documentation of supported escape sequences.
  Additional file transfer protocols:
        CompuServe 'B' protocol for faster file transfers on CompuServe.
        Ymodem batch file transfer - automatically recognized!

  New command language features:

  Conditional execution.
  Branching to user-defined labels.

26 user variables.
 Input from files, dialog boxes, or alerts allow customised DO files.
 Enhanced WAIT command with optional timeout allows improved error detection
and correction.

 EXECUTE command lets you run TOS and GEM programs from within FLASH [e.g.
ARC.TTP, command shells, or GEM applications like Arcshell and even 1st Word].

 Log text to capture buffer.
 FREE command free's memory that the capture buffer has taken.

 'History'

 Command line history allows you to scroll back through 64 of your previous
command lines and typeahead lines, edit and resend them.

 FLASH 1.5 is available as a free update to current FLASH owners. Just send
your master FLASH disk back to us, with $5 to cover shipping and handling, and
we'll send your copy of 1.5 out to you the same day we get your disk.

          FLASH update
          Antic Software
          544 Second St.
          S.F., CA 94107
==
 =Upgrades Part 1=
 ================

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GEnie are *official* information services of Atari Corporation.

 To sign up for GEnie service, call (with modem) 800-638-8369. Upon
connection type HHH (no RETURN after that). Wait for the U#= prompt. Type
XJM11877,GEnie and hit RETURN. The system will prompt you for your
information.
 ==
 ****
 Topic 4   Tue Jun 17, 1986 BOBR [Bob Retelle] at 23:48 EDT
 Sub: Memory Upgrades
 ****
 C.KELLEY [Chris]   at 18:58 PST

 There is a place in Texas called Aerco that is selling an upgrade board for
the ST that is supposed to be:
 1)plug in, no soldering
 2)expandable to 4 meg
 3)$189(+$20 for the extra sockets to accommodate 4 megs).

 The catch is that they apparently only sell it with the 256k chips installed
(you cannot buy a "bare bones" board), and you must acquire the 1meg chips
yourself. it also mentions the need for a larger power supply above 1 meg, but
not where to get them. the upgrade appears to be for the 520 only. the ad is
in the December '86 ANTIC, pg.96. the address is:
                      Aerco
                      Box 18093
                      Austin, TX 78760

 C.KELLEY [Chris]   at 22:57 PST

I got some info from Aerco. You will not need a larger power supply after all because the 1meg chips do not pull as much power as the 256K Chips do (The 1meg chips are CMOS, apparently the 256k chips are not). It will fit under the RF shield. No soldering, you just put a couple of cards in the computer sandwiched between some chips and the board. You can buy the board bare bones for approx. $30 less. They have 1meg chips you can buy. It looks nice.

        C.Kelley

 P.S. I don't have one - I'm also checking into some other upgrades.

 T.VANDAM   at 20:52 EST

 I have seen and installed one of the upgrade boards from Aerco in Texas. I didn't think the board look cheasy at all and it installed very easy. As for the clamps just gripping the two IC, they really go on tight and don't move that easy. There is absolutely no soldering!! The unit was up and running in 30-45 minutes. The board can be gotten from:
 Lakeside Enterprises
 6638 - 40th Avenue
 Hudsonville, Mi. 49426
 (616) 669-1884

 $175.00 with the extra 20 sockets installed, includes shipping. One meg chips should be coming down to about $22.00 in March. One meg chips are put in the empty sockets to go to 2.5 meg. The 256K chips already installed on the board are removed and replaced with 1 meg chips to go to 4 meg. The fit is a little tight under the shield, but cutting isn't absolutely necessary.

 C.STANFIELD   at 17:20 EST

 I purchased an upgrade board from DIVERSE DATA for $129 including shipping. Three solder connections are required on the back of the board to the MMU chip. It fits under the RFI shield, but not without some squeezing and stress. I almost smoked my ST. The tips of the MMU that you must solder to are VERY SMALL and VERY CLOSE TOGETHER. My first attempt seemed to work; BUT THEN, CRASH. A wire came loose after which the ST wouldn't read any disks. It didn't seem to recognize the drive. At one point I removed the board and my ST STILL didn't work. I was kicking myself roundly for destroy ing my computer while "improving" it. AT LAST I managed to get the 3 wires soldered securely . My upgrade has It is nice to compile and link with Mark Williams C ALL IN RAM DISK. If you are prone to self doubt, DON'T buy this upgrade . On the other hand, the chips are socketed so 1 MEG chips can replace the current 256 K chips sometime in the future and if done correctly it DOES WORK. It is 1040 compatible and cheap. Call:

 DIVERSE DATA
 305-940-0458.

 D.ENGEL [Thunderbird]   at 15:54 EST

 Help!!!!!

 I purchased 16 256K RAM chips to upgrade my 520ST to a Megabyte. I was informed by the sales clerk that if I have ROM TOS, then I will have to add some resistors to the address lines, or I will fry my ST. Is this guy pulling my leg, or is it true. I am using instructions which I downloaded from GEnie, and they don't mention any resistors.

 Can anyone tell me if I need them, and if so, where they go and what they

are.

 Thanks in advance.   ---------=====Doug=========-----

 HTCOLONNA   at 20:59 EST

 Alot of people have NOT installed the resistors and have no problems. However
Atari recommends them and I think it's best to be safe when you're playing
around with the guts of the computer. (How's that for techie talk?)

 D.ENGEL [Thunderbird]   at 00:00 EST

 Well, I was looking for specific details as to which address lines require
the resistors. I believe that they must be 68 ohm, but I do not have any
instructions which even mention them. Anyone out there know about them? I
can't wait to get my Meg, so I am a bit anxious. I am going to try a 'unique'
upgrade. What I intend to do is to place 16 pin DIP sockets on the backs of my
existing RAM. By doing this, I will be able to retain the new RAMs when I
bloat the thing to 4 Meg in the future. It's a little tight under the shield
with the sockets in there but no tighter than most of the add-on boards I've
seen. I'll let you know what happens, as soon as I get the scoop on the
resistors.

 Thanx.
 ---------=====Doug=========-----

 TIMPURVES [Turbo_tim]   at 09:45 EST

 The resisters just clamp down the lines so the don't "ring" and cause memory
errors.. I have never installed them in any of the machines I have upgraded...
But that doesn't mean they will not help the upgrade be more reliable.

 ALEXLEAVENS [Alex_Leavens] at 12:57 EST

 Yep. The resistors get installed on the RAS and CAS lines of the extra bank,
in order (as Tim said) to help prevent the chips 'ringing'. I've found I have
fewer re-booting problems with the resistors in. You install one resistor on
each line of RAS and CAS (for a total of three resistors) between the MMU and
the bank of RAM. --alex @ Atari

 [Ed. Upgrade information will be continuing in the weeks ahead. These
messages came from the ST RT on GEnie Services.
 ===
 =Hard Disk Users Group=
 =======================

 HDUG Pricelist Beginning 1 Oct, 1987

Number	Item Description	Price
MZ004	Modem Cable	11.97 [3]
MZ008 |Star NX-10 Printer|185.97[15]
MZ08a	NX-10 Ribbon Cart	6.75 [2]
MZ013 |FlashBack! Utility| 25.95 [4]
MZ015	ST Express! BBS	57.97 [4]
MZ023 |Adaptec 4000a Card|111.97 [7]
MZ024 |Adaptec 4070 Card|148.97 [7]
MZ025 |Alum. Mounting Kit| 7.95 [3]
MZ028 |Controller > Drive| 18.95 [3]

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MZ029 |Controller > MIO  | 13.95 [3]
MZ030 |Y Adapter Set     |  8.49 [3]
MZ031 |Full Height Case  |139.96[11]
MZ032 |Separate Power-Sup|122.69 [8]
MZ033 |5Meg HD Complete! |189.95[17]
MZ034 |20Meg HD Complete!|599.97[22]
MZ035 |20+20 Double Case!|945.97[22]
MZ036 |Kraft Joysticks   |  6.50 [2]
MZ37a |BASF Disks - 10   |  5.20 [1]
MZ37b |BASF Disks - 25   | 12.75 [2]
MZ37c |BASF Disks - 100  | 50.00 [4]
```

 Note: Cash/Check/Money Order Payable To "Network: Atari" Will Be Accepted As
Payment. Personal Checks Will Be Held For Bank Clearance.

 Mail-Orders Can Be Sent To:

        Network: HDUG
        5831 Sun Bay
        San Antonio, Tx.
              78244

 Network: Atari HD Express! BBS and The Hard Disk User Group (HDUG) are (c)
June, 1984 by: Chuck Leazott and Z-Enterprises, Inc.

 "Welcome Aboard The Ride That Lasts Forever!"

 Network: Atari Hardware/Software

 As of now, Network: Atari can order Hardware, Software and Accessories for
the following computers...

 <1> Apple II   <2> Apple IIC
 <3> Apple IIGS <4> MacIntosh
 <5> Atari 8-Bit <6> Atari ST
 <7> Commodore   <7> Amiga
 <9> IBM PC & XT <10> IBM PC Jr.

 For all of the above computers, we can order many items from most
manufacturers. If you desire a specific computer item, please tell me the
following:

 <1> Computer Type <2> Manufacturer
 <3> Complete Product Name

 Please leave me E-Mail on the BBS, or call the voice number listed below and
I'll leave you a price quote. We may not be able to order the particular item

you request, as some items get discontinued, but if it's available, we will
probably get it cheaper than most others. Let us try. What have you got to
lose?

    We dare you to find it cheaper.

 Voice: 512-662-9764
 Modem: 512-662-9765
 ==
 =Product Review=
 ===============

The following is a review of Interlink ST that appeared in the October issue
of ST World. It is the most complete review done to date. Permission was
obtained from the publisher to reprint.

 Author: Ralph Turner
 Publisher: ST World
 October 87

 Would you buy a modem, or use the one you've already got, if telecomputing
could somehow be made easier? Or, if you're already an experienced modem
user, are you looking for a better terminal package? If the answer to either
question is yes, you'll want to read this review of Interlink ST, a recently
released telecommunications program from Intersect Software Corp.

 In the past, using a tel-com program could get pretty complicated,
especially for a novice. First configuring your ST's parameters - baud rate,
parity, mode of transfer, emulation mode, etc. - can be tedious. Especially
when different called systems require different configurations.

 Second, each called system has it's own labyrinth of sections and special
interest groups, as well as its own unique set of commands. Even after you've
successfully negotiated a system a couple of times, there's no guarantee that
the next time you call it up you'll remember how you did it.

 INTO THIS CONFUSING ENVIRONMENT COMES INTERLINK ST

 The first thing you'll notice about the program is that it has two main
screens, one of which is displayed at all times. The On-Line Screen is the
one you'll normally use when you are connected to the called computer. The
other screen, called the Main Menu, displays a status window at the bottom and
a GEM menu bar at the top, and is activated if you want to use the mouse to
pull down GEM windows or access desk accessories. You'll also use this screen
to check Interlink's current settings or to use the buffer, which is really a
mini word processor.

 You can switch back and forth between these two screens very easily. If
you're keyboard oriented like I am, you press the F1 [Function Key 1] to bring
up the On-Line screen, or the Undo key when you want the Main Menu Screen. I
like being able to switch back and forth without having to touch the mouse.
On the other hand, if you're rodent oriented, you use the right mouse to
toggle between the two screens, which is also easy.

 STATUS LINE AND TYPE AHEAD BUFFER

 Whenever the on-line screen is activated, you've got a choice of what you
want at the bottom of the screen: either a status line or a type-ahead buffer.
If you opt for the status line, the following nine pieces of information will
be displayed:

 <*> the amount of time you've been on-line
 <*> a time-of -day clock
 <*> a chimes active symbol
 <*> whether you're connected or not
 <*> whether you're using the recorder or not
 <*> the baud rate
 <*> the duplex setting
 <*> the percentage of buffer space remaining
 <*> whether the buffer is on or not

At any time, however, a press of the F9 key will replace the status line with the type-ahead buffer. This allows you to type, and store in the buffer, up to 79 characters from the keyboard (including control characters) that you can send to the other systems whenever you want. The contents of the buffer are sent whenever you press a carriage return. However, if you don't want to send the typed-ahead-message, you can return to the status line (via the F9 key) and the buffer's contents remain for future use.

 This type-ahead buffer is great for chatting, or sending a file name, etc. Since you don't cut off the flow of information from the remote system by typing into the buffer, it allows you to compose messages (including the inevitable backspacing corrections) at the same time you're keeping your eye on the incoming transmission, thus saving time and the anxiety caused by on-line composition.

 The remaining nine function key combinations, are used to perform other actions, either directly, or via pop-up windows which require mouse choices. If you're unsure at any time about what key to press, there's always the Help key. This will display a screen that lists all the main functions and their corresponding keys.

 DIALING A NUMBER

 One of Interlink's nicest features is its Auto Dialer, which automates the dialing of frequently called numbers.   Before you can use the Auto Dialer, however, you've got to set it up. But even this is easy.

 To set up the Auto Dialer you press the F6 key, which brings up the window displayed in Diagram 2 (Phone Dialer window). When you click on one of the twenty dialer buttons (the ten boxes to the right and left of the window), the button becomes highlighted. You can now type in the following information:

 <*> the name of the BBS
 <*> its telephone number
 <*> any "LOG" responses (such as Control-C) or delays (such as 3 seconds) which the called system will need when you get connected
 <*> any PreFix or SuFix numbers required by your long distance dialing service (such as Sprint, etc.).

 The next step in the set-up procedure is to mouse-click on the RS232 button, which brings up the Set RS232 Parameters box. [see diagram 3] As in all the other menu windows, the mouse is used to press buttons which toggle different functions on or off. For instance, clicking on the "full" or "half" buttons will change the duplex setting. After your RS232 configuration is to your liking, you click on the Exit button. Once back in the Dialer Editor, you can, if you wish, click on the Style or Modem buttons to set additional parameters. [see diagram 4&5] So far, what you've done is set up the parameters and instructions for one specific system that you plan to call. If you want, you can go through the set-up procedure for the other systems, too. If you do, you'll assign them to any of the remaining 19 Dialer buttons.

 Once you've set up the parameters for as many numbers as you want, you click on the save button, which writes all your choices to a file called DIAL.DAT. Set-up of the Auto Dialer is now complete. From now on, whenever you want to call one of these systems, all you do is press F6. When the dialer appears, double click on the name of the system you want. Interlink not only will dial the number automatically, but will configure the ST according to the parameters you've already set for that particular telephone number.

 This makes calling different numbers a snap, Let's say you habitually call

three different BBS's. One of them operates at 300 baud; another operates at
1200 baud but requires linefeeds; and a third operates at 2400 baud. With one
click of the mouse, Interlink's Auto Dialer not only dials the BBS, but also
sets the required parameters for that specific system. In other words, you'll
never again have to change the baud, the linefeed, or any of the other many
possible parameters.

 ADDITIONAL DIALING FEATURES

 Additionally, clicking on the Auto button will cause a number to be dialed
repeatedly until a connect is established. (You can adjust how many attempts
are to be made.) Clicking on the Group button, followed by choosing several
dialer buttons, causes Interlink to dial the selected numbers, one after the
other, until it gets a connect.

 I next tried out the Execute Program function, which allows you to run
another program from within Interlink. I found it particularly useful, since
on occasion I've forgotten to run my SCRNSAVE program before loading
Interlink. (This program blanks out my mono monitor after three minutes of
inactivity). The Execute Program feature allowed me to run SCRNSAVE from
within Interlink without having to exit the program and return to the desktop.
Another use for this function would be to run an ARC compression program
before sending a file. Note finally, that Execute Program can operate at the
same time you're receiving data from the modem.

 THE RECORDER AN AUTOMATIC MACRO CREATOR

 The feature that impresses me the most about Interlink, however is its
Recorder. Once you turn this function on (and believe me, you will turn it
on) it records all the interactions between the service you've called, and
Interlink, as well as recording your mouse movements and selections.

 Once you've made a recording, you can play it back anytime you want, and
Interlink will automatically go through the steps and interactions that are
stored in the recording. Let's say I want to call a particular BBS and check
for messages. First, I press Alt-R, which turns on the Recorder. Then I
proceed to go through all the steps required by that BBS: I dial it's number,
give my password when prompted, get to the message base, choose the proper
special interest group, see if there are any new messages for me, and if
there are, read them. At this point I log-off and turn off Interlink's
Recorder.

 Thereafter, whenever I want to call that BBS to check for new messages, all I
have to do is start the recording. Interlink will handle everything
automatically - from dialing, to getting the messages to hanging up. In fact,
you can even set a clock and have Interlink run the recording at a later time.
This permits the automatic calling of a system even when you're away from your
computer.

 Since you give each recording a name (and since they're stored on a floppy or
a hard drive) you can make as many recordings as you want. Thus you can have
different recordings for different BBS's and for different tasks within a
given BBS. For instance, you can have one recording that checks for and
captures new messages on a BBS, and another that checks for recent public
domain programs to download.

 A MINI BBS

 Another of Interlink's novel features turns your ST into a mini BBS. This
function is called Answer Mode, and it permits remote access to your ST from

another computer. It even provides for three remote access levels, each with
their own passwords.

  There's the low access level which only allows the remote caller to leave
messages and download or upload files (via xmodem) from a specified folder in
your ST. The medium level allows access to everything except the file delete
and message read capabilities. Finally, the high access level allows the
remote caller to perform all the TOS functions, including copy, rename,
delete, download, upload, show info, and printing to the screen.

  FILE TRANSFER

  Interlink supports a number of methods of file transfer, including XMODEM,
YMODEM and ASCII. A forth method, merely called "????", allows you to load
external transfer drivers from a floppy, such as a Kermit driver that's now
being worked on. A number of Emulation modes are provided for, including
VT52, VT100, and a user definable translation.

  When the Chimes feature is turned on, a pleasant set of tones is heard the
moment you are connected. And if you have a monochrome monitor you can choose
between having 48 or 24 lines of text displayed on the screen.

  Additionally, Interlink allows you to perform, from within the program, the
standard TOS desktop functions. You can create a folder; rename, copy,
delete, show or print a file; as well as format a disk. In fact, in addition
to the conventional formatting, you can perform a nonstandard 400K per side
formatting.

  IS THERE ANDY BAD NEWS?

  So far Interlink sounds great. Now let's talk about its possible short-
comings. I think the best way to do this is to compare it with Flash, which
is possibly the most popular tel-com program for the ST.

  One of the nice features of Flash is that you can perform any of its 71
functions right from the keyboard, without leaving it's on-line screen. This
means that your view of the incoming data isn't interrupted, and you can
immediately see the consequences of changing, say, the baud rate or the
parity.

  Contrasted with this, when changing one of Interlink's parameters, a window
pops up, and you have to use the mouse to click on buttons. Unfortunately, the
windows block out the incoming data. Additionally, having to use the mouse
slows you down, as far as I am concerned. However you're probably not going
to be changing parameters very often, given the program's advanced auto-
dialing and recording features.

  And then there are the function keys. Admittedly, Interlink allows the
creation of 20 programmable function keys, through the use of Alt and Control
keys. Basically, however, these keys are merely for sending strings of
characters. Contrasted with this, FLASH's function key capability is almost
unlimited, since a function key string can contain any of the program's 71
commands. In other words, FLASH's function keys can be programmed to do
anything, whereas Interlink's function keys have relatively limited
applications. In spite of this, Interlink's automated features probably make
it the better program for most users.

  Interlink is not copy protected, and the 48 page manual is quite good. It
has an index, and it's explanations are logically laid out. The program works
on a 520, 1040, mono and color systems, but requires TOS in ROM. Finally, in

addition to having a customer support telephone line (813-923-8774), Intersect
Software maintains a BBS that contains a customer support section
(813-924-4590)

 This is a feature packed program which is very easy to use. No wonder
Interlink ST is gaining such a following.

 -Update-

 Since Ralph Turner received his version (1.0) of the program there have been
several revisions. The current version of Interlink ST is 1.7 and many new
features have been added. One of the new features is the ability to run
recordings from the Function keys as well as the answer line of the autolog,
this allows access to all 114+ commands available in Interlink from the
function keys. Interlink has been fully tested on the Mega ST, upgraded 520ST
and 1040ST.

 The new Atari SX212 300/1200 baud Hayes compatible modem works right out of
the box (no changes to the default settings required). Just plug it in, load
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 FCC PROPOSAL TO RAISE PHONE FEES FOR COMPUTER NETWORK USERS

 (Combined Reports)

 Oct. 5, 1987

 FCC Chairman Dennis R. Patrick said October 2, 1987 that a proposal to raise
telephone fees for computer network users is based on fairness. But users say
the plan would crush the fledgling industry.

 In testimony before the House Energy and Commerce Telecommunications
subcommittee, Patrick said the proposal would charge computer users the same
fees now paid by long-distance callers.

 Home computer users, say the added costs would force many of them off the
computer networks they use to communicate with electronic databases across the
country -- exchanging information on electronic bulletin boards, checking
stock market reports, making airline reservations, and exchanging public
domain computer programs.

 Witnesses also told the panel that the higher charges, proposed by the
Federal Communications Commission, would drive thousands of computer users --
from hobbyists to doctors -- off their electronic networks and slow the
growing use of the technology.

 "This would severely retard the coming of the information age," said Allan
Conner, president of DunsNet, a company of the Dun & Bradstreet Corp. The
implications of the proposal extend far beyond home computer users.

 For example, Conner said, imposing access charges would substantially drive
up the cost of automatic authorization of credit cards -- raising the cost of
a single verification from the current 12 cents to 19 cents. This cost, he

said, ultimately would be borne by the consumer. "Consumers would lose, retailers would lose, the credit card people would lose. The only people who would gain are people who use fraudulent credit cards," Conner said.

 The higher charges will reduce the use of electronic information services, slowing or even crippling an infant industry, which in turn will reduce revenues from the fees, he said. "In essence, no one gains and many people lose if this goes forward," he told the House Energy and Commerce telecommunications subcommittee.

 Schools would be forced to cut back their use of electronic data bases for research, said John Stuckey, director of academic computing at Northeastern University.

 Cutbacks also would be forced at hospitals, where doctors rely on computerized medical data bases for quick reference, said Jacquelline Bastille, director of the medical library at Massachusetts General Hospital. "This is a vital service," she said. "Access to biomedical information is needed quickly. Same-day retrieval is critical to quality patient care."

 Higher fees also would drive many of the roughly 750,000 home computer users off the electronic networks they use to read stock reports and news stories, call up airline schedules, and even line up blind dates, said Richard tenEyck of the Boston Computer Society, the largest computer group in the country with 25,000 members nationwide.

 "This is a genuine threat to our society," said Rep. Edward J. Markey, D-Mass., subcommittee chairman.

 LONE WITNESS DEFENDS PROPOSAL

 FCC Chairman Dennis R. Patrick, the lone witness defending the proposal, said government regulators see the issue as one of fairness -- everyone who uses the local phone network should pay the costs of maintaining it. "If we exempt one category of users, that means another category of users will have to pay more," he said. "It's not clear to me it is appropriate in an equity sense if it increases the amount borne by low-income voice users."

 "The commission recognizes the valuable role enhanced (information) services play in this nation's information age," Patrick said. But the FCC must also weigh the effects of the proposal on ordinary telephone subscribers, who already are paying similar fees, he said.

 Patrick estimated the access charges on information service providers would reduce long-distance rates by about 1 percent. "We want to see the (computer) networks evolve in response to the economics of the marketplace ... not in response to subsidies," he said.

 Rep. Edward J. Markey, D-Mass., subcommittee chairman, noted the strong opposition to the proposal from computer users who have sent him more than 4,000 letters. "Our highest priority must be that these services are available and the information flows freely," he said. With imposition of the proposed access charges, "information services will become the exclusive prerogative of the rich."

 The FCC, when it adopted the access charge system in 1982, exempted information service providers from the fees because of the fear that the new industry would not withstand the sudden increase in costs. Now, the FCC believes, it may be time to lift the exemption, but the agency has found scant support for that conclusion. Even some of the local Bell operating companies,

which receive the access charges, have reacted with only lukewarm support.

 SHARE THE LINE

 Users also cite that phone companies combine such electronic calls so that
several of them may be transmitted over the same telephone line. Since
standard (voice) calls cannot be combined this way, users claim that several
users would be charged for the same call.

 The proposal would add about $4.50 an hour to the cost of hooking up to
information services. For some of the lower-priced services, the additional
gost would more than double the hourly rates.

 Floyd H. Trogdon, vice president of Telenet Communications Corp., a computer
network that connects computer users with information data bases, said the
access charges would raise some of its off-peak rates by 500 percent. He
estimated that the access charges from the computer industry would lower long-
distance rates by less than one half of one percent.

 Computer users said electronic information services are already paying their
share of phone network costs in a flat-rate surcharge per customer. Markey
took the panel on the road to Boston, a high-tech center that has generated
much of the opposition to the proposal.

 "This (industry) will essentially disappear if the FCC access charges goes
through," said Richard tenEyck, telecommunications director of the Boston
Computer Society, whose 25,000 members make it the largest computer group in
the country. The loss, he said in a telephone interview earlier this week,
will cut off these services to many of the approximately 750,000 home computer
users, some of whom are handicapped or elderly and use computers as a gateway
to the outside world.

 Using one of the more than 15,000 electronic billboards on computer networks
throughout the country, a computer user with a question about how to handle a
tax matter, for example, can dial into a network, pose the question in a
message and post it on such a billboard. Readers scanning the different
messages can answer the question, posting their message in the same way.

 "That kind of interaction happens on the order of every five seconds
throughout the United States," tenEyck said. He added, "One of the ways to
make the technology more affordable is to increase the size of the market.
Reducing the market is a step backward."
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